



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

CITIZEN WORKGROUP

Developing Alternatives for Updating the Upper Missouri River Reservoir Fisheries Management Plan (UMRRFMP)

June 8, 2009

MACo Conference Room (Meeting 6)

SESSION SUMMARY

Process Objectives

1. In 6-8 meetings, explore aspects of a fisheries Management Plan for Holter, Hauser, and Canyon Ferry Reservoirs.
2. Within the Workgroup's charter, develop consensus alternatives and recommend those alternatives to FWP.

Session Objectives

1. Review and come to agreement on the revised content and structure of the draft Management Plan.
2. Review and come to agreement on the goals and objectives for each body of water.
3. Complete recommended alternative management strategies.

Workgroup Members Present

Luckie Bethel	Virgil Binkley	Charles Bocock
Bart Bratlien	Doug Breker	Pete Cardinal
Alex Ferguson	Dale Gilbert	Nick Jones
George Liknes	Tim McAlpine	Dan Nottingham
Darren Raney	Timothy Rauser	Keith Schultz
Dan Spence	Pat Volkmar	Arne Wick
Virginia Tribe (Facilitator)		

FWP Technical Support and Observers

Beth Giddings	Eric Roberts
Chris Hunter	Don Skaar

Completed Agenda Items

"Ratifying" the May Meeting Summary

Workgroup members reviewed the general summary of the May 4 meeting, with the understanding that much of the May 4 meeting results are documented in the draft Plan language. The Group began that review but only got as far as Canyon Ferry.

Reviewing/Moving Toward Draft Recommendations

(see June 8 Second Draft revisions/new language to be distributed by Eric)

- The Workgroup affirmed the broad management goals/desired end results for the Complex established at their April 2009 meeting.
- The Workgroup reviewed, edited and generally approved the Canyon Ferry introductory material prepared by Eric since the last meeting.
- Acknowledging the collaborative framework established by the Workgroup at the front end of the process:
 - They revised/drafted/tentatively agreed to the limiting factors influencing Canyon Ferry.
 - They drafted goals and objectives and management strategies for Rainbow Trout and to some extent, for yellow perch.
 - They agreed that Eric should draft the rationale portion for each species.
 - They were not able to complete their discussion regarding walleye and that prevented them from completing strategies for yellow perch.
 - They were not able to complete their discussion regarding forage species.
 - They did not get to brown trout and burbot (ling).
 - They did not get to the other Canyon Ferry management issues with the exception of the use of live bait section which they agreed to maintain from the current Plan.
 - They did not have discussion around the newly drafted language for the other Upper Missouri bodies of water.
- The Workgroup did not get to the “missed issues” list prepared by Virgil but will review it at the next meeting.

Where Do We Go From Here?

- The Workgroup agreed to a July date for the next meeting – but because 3 members cannot attend, FWP will work with Group members to find a date in the next 2 months where everyone can be present.
- Eric will “clean up” the changes made by the Workgroup at the June 8 meeting and attach them to the other part of the draft document. Workgroup members are asked to review the language regarding the other bodies of water (work done by the Workgroup at the May 4 meeting) and be prepared to move through them at the next meeting.
- Group members are asked to think about the collaborative framework and how it might help with the remaining discussion on Canyon Ferry. See the collaborative framework on the following pages.

Collaborative Framework

“Interests” at the Table (Listed January 2009 meeting)

- It’s in the interest of angler/recreation businesses to have species diversity.
- It’s in the interest of coldwater anglers to have cold water species such as brown trout fishery below Hauser and where appropriate, Kokanee.
- It’s in the interest of anglers to have Walleye number in balance with other species so there are more of all fish.

- It's in the interest of anglers to have diversity in species to spread out the fishing pressure.
- It's in the interest of walleye anglers to enhance the walleye fishery meaning better quality fish - larger and easier to catch.
- It's in the interest of anglers to get perch and trout (or possibly other forage fish) numbers up so the forage base is healthy.
- It's in the interest of anglers to limit walleye on Holter.
- It's in the interest of this process to analyze and understand the role of carp in the system.
- It's in the interest of kids who fish to have quantity and quality fishing opportunities.
- It's in the interest of kids who fish to have biological practices in place - that improve habitat and fish populations.
- It's in the interest of kids who fish to have prey fish enhanced through increased planting of trout.
- It's in the interest of kids who fish to have a multi-species fishery.
- It's in the interest of FWP to maintain the fisheries resources through easily understood regulations and closures where needed.
- It's in the interest of FWP to maintain the highest quality fishery and fishing opportunities for trout, perch, walleye, etc.
- It's in the interest of FWP to enhance and maintain the highest forage base possible in the Reservoir complex.
- It's in the interest of FWP to maintain safety, sustainable harvest, and commercial and recreational use on flat water and the tailrace.
- It's in the interest of FWP to develop viable, realistic alternatives to evaluate and use in the Management Plan.
- It's in the interest of FWP to restore and maintain summer and winter fisheries.

Guiding Principles (Finalized with Full Agreement April 2009 meeting)

- We believe that the bodies of water in the Upper Missouri River Reservoir System should be managed as separate systems including the stretches of River that connect those bodies.
- We seek a multi-species approach to management of those bodies and the system as a whole.
- We believe that management goals and strategies for the system should result in healthy age class distribution and growth rates for those multi-species.
- At the same time, we believe that the system as a whole, cannot tolerate additional predatory species (i.e., Northern Pike) and that the Management Plan should include strategies accordingly.
- We believe that maintenance, enhancement and diversification of forage species are critical to the health of the system.
- We believe that some bird species are influencing the system and that the Management Plan should explore and address that issue.
- We believe that the changing dynamics of the system and its parts require a well-defined adaptive management strategy and process, and that adaptive management should be an integral part of the Management Plan.

We believe that a useful adaptive management strategy should include triggers and benchmarks that help drive ongoing management decisions and regulations.

- We believe that the Management Plan should be science-based but recognize that social and economic factors play a large role in achieving social acceptance. We believe that biology and social interests share goals.

Goals/Desired End Results (Finalized with Full Agreement April 2009 meeting)

The Upper Missouri Reservoir Management Plan should result in:

1. Management of all 3 Reservoirs and connecting River Sections as healthy multi-species fisheries.
2. Strategies that emphasize Trout and Walleye while recognizing Perch as an important game and forage species.
3. Improved forage species and availability for game fish in the Upper Missouri.
4. Realistic regulations and limits while providing a high level of angler satisfaction.
5. Social acceptance based on shared biologic and social/economic interests.
6. An adaptive management plan and process to react to the changing dynamics of the system and adjust accordingly.